



Laura Rae (Olson) Elken

December 16, 1952 - October 11, 2018

Laura Elken Obituary

Laura R. Elken, 65, died peacefully on Thursday, October 11th at her home in El Dorado Hills, Calif.

Laura was born on December 16, 1952, in San Diego, Calif. to Don and Rae Olson and she grew up in Santa Ana and Tustin in Orange County. Rae taught her a love for the beaches and ocean, and Don took the family on many great vacations that involved activities like snow skiing, water skiing, fishing, camping and houseboating on the rivers and lakes of California. Laura was a good student and athlete at Foothill High School, swimming backstroke and playing field hockey on varsity teams.

Laura ventured far from Orange County to attend St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn. It was there that she met Tom Elken, a Minnesota boy who became her husband and the love of her life. It was also at St. Olaf that Laura graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Laura and Tom got married in 1975 and moved to married student housing at Stanford University. Their two sons, Evan and Nathan were born in San Francisco and New Jersey, respectively. Laura and Tom lived in New Jersey for 5 years before moving back to the S.F. Bay Area to Newark, Calif. in 1982.

Laura practiced her nursing career both in New Jersey and California with an

interruption to be a great mom for her young sons. The best part of her career was in Fremont, Calif. at the free-standing Washington Birthing Center and later at Washington Hospital. There she met many colleagues who loved her sparkling personality, efficient competence and sincere care, and became some of her best friends. She taught classes in neonatal resuscitation to both doctors and nurses and gave many babies the therapeutic boost they needed to start life. She also enjoyed teaching some of her colleagues and friends about the finer things in life that could be found in places like Palo Alto, Carmel and San Francisco.

Beyond her sons and husband, the joys of her life were her two daughters-in-law, Margie and Shannon, and the 5 fantastic grandchildren they created with her sons. Laura is also survived by her beloved siblings, Ann Malotky and Donald C. (DC) Olson, and their spouses Richard and Karen, resp., whom Laura loved as siblings, from Redding, CA. Laura was devoted to her extended family and was the instigator for many a great family vacation in places like Hawaii, Mexico or Shasta Lake. She also loved the biennial family gatherings at cabins near Mt. Shasta to celebrate Christmas.

Laura loved to travel early and often. She started at age 16 with a foreign study trip to Germany and Austria. Later in life, some of her favorite trips were to Hawaii, Mexico, the Czech Republic, Austria, Germany, Norway, Australia and Belize.

She loved spending time at her condo on the Willamette River in Portland, OR, where she and Tom could be closer to Evan's family. She was thrilled to move to her new home in El Dorado Hills in 2016, which was close to Nathan's family, and where she made many great and loving friends in the Heritage development and in surrounding areas. Laura was the consummate decorator, host and cook -- hosting way more than her share of great parties for friends and relatives. Laura was beautiful and had a bubbly personality,

lighting up any room she entered.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in her name to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (stjude.org) or (800) 822-6344.

There will be a memorial service at 11 a.m. and reception starting at noon on Saturday October 27, 2018 at Faith Episcopal Church, 2200 Country Club Drive, Cameron Park, CA.

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Tribute Wall

ES

“ *An A Garden Path was sent by Huiyu Feng on October 24, 2018*

Expression of Sympathy - October 24, 2018 at 09:39 AM

ES

“ *A The Color of Memories Table Arrangement was sent on October 19, 2018Our paths took us different directions but you will remain my best friend, Laura. I loved you then and always will....Debbie*

Expression of Sympathy - October 19, 2018 at 12:56 PM

LB

“ *Mark and I are so sorry to learn of Laura;s death. Our hearts go out to Tom, their sons and daughters-in-law and grandchildren. We can remember meeting Tom and Laura times when we were visiting our son in California and Laura telling a story over dinner and Tom's total enjoyment of Laura's truly warm and bubbly personality. It is impossible to grasp that she is no longer on this earth..*

Linda and Mark Boginsky - October 16, 2018 at 10:23 PM

DT

“ *Dear Tom, This is a beautiful tribute to your dear wife. We will miss her sparkle and her heart of gold, but we will not forget! Much love and sympathy to all who will miss her dearly,*

Dana Terrell - October 16, 2018 at 08:37 PM